

Dear Family:

*"But little children are alive in Christ..."*

These words, penned by the prophet Mormon some 1,600 years ago, have become our family's mantra (mine, really) in recent weeks. However, unlike Mormon, who was writing in the broader context of a denunciation of infant baptism, my repeated utterance of the phrase is typically in response to the increasingly frequent occasions on which I catch myself wanting to pack up Sophie in a FedEx box and ship her off to some other family. I love Sophie and all. But she's picked up a number of unfortunate habits (probably not all that uncommon among three-year-olds) that sometimes just make me want to, well, pack her up in a FedEx box and ship her off to some other family. To combat these uncharitable emotions, I've started responding to her inappropriate behavior by quietly repeating Mormon's words to myself three times. And then I swat her on the butt. And then she screams at me, and the cycle continues. In my weaker moments, Crystal has caught me muttering to myself, "Alive in Christ, but dead to me." But I'm trying to do better.

But Sophie has her sweet moments, too. She likes to sing, for instance. And even if it's the same two lines of the same three songs, it's still a lot nicer to listen to than most of the other sounds she's capable of emitting. Her latest favorite is the alphabet song, which she sings at approximately 100 decibels as she runs through the house (usually when I'm on the phone with a client). True to character, she has her own personal version:

A, B, C, D, E, F, G

H, I, W, Y and Z

2, R, S

2, R, B

Now I know my ABC's

Next time won't you [unintelligible] me.

[Repeat]



Lucy and her mother both celebrated birthdays this month. Lucy turned 6, while Crystal turned half-of-70. (She loves when I express it that way.) Lucy's party, attended by her sisters, Grandma Christine, Aunt Coco, cousin Abby, and a half-dozen school friends, was okay. It was okay, considering it was held during a torrential rainstorm that knocked out power briefly (a few hours, including part of the party) and forced a number of outdoor activities, including the federally mandated piñata smash, into the house. I can't remember the last birthday party at our house that *didn't* feature a piñata smash. The kids don't seem to mind that all of their birthday parties consist of essentially the same four games, chicken nuggets, presents, and cake. Crystal's celebration was somewhat more subdued and was basically little more than an extended family home evening activity. But she got her iPod, so everything's cool.



I'm pleased that two of my cousins moved into the area this

Love,  
 T, C, H, L, S & G



month. I haven't spoken with Richard Henrichsen yet. But I look forward to it. Richard is my mother's brother's son and was my roommate during my lone post-mission, pre-marriage year at BYU. He has reportedly taken a position with a Defense contractor in the area and will be joined by his wife, Jo Ann, and their four(?) kids sometime next month. The other cousin (who, by his nature, would never take offense at being referred to as "the *other* cousin") is Reed Farnsworth (my father's sister's son if you're still keeping score). Reed took a job with a Columbia, Md.-based mortgage company, which gave us a lot to talk about when we played golf two weekends ago. Reed doubtless noticed that golf in Maryland is a lot like golf in Utah, except that in Maryland the courses are less picturesque and more expensive, your drives don't go as far (but are more likely to get lost in the woods), and the rangers exist solely for the purpose of yelling at you for holding up play. I think I'll be able to get him to go again, though. (Early forecast for this Saturday: Sunny and 72 degrees. Call me, Reed!) Anyway, we're happy to have him. Like Richard, Reed is here alone for now. His wife will be joining him once he finds one. It should be a fun Thanksgiving.

Grace is closing in on 8 months (just 44 more Sundays until she can go to nursery) and should be crawling any minute. She's up on her hands and knees a lot and rocks back and forth. She spits up a lot, but smiles even more. I think we'll keep her.

It's Halloween, which means sometime in the next 20 minutes or so, in keeping with tradition, Grant and Andrew with their families will join Coco in leaving their homes vulnerable to egg attacks to come over to our house for chili and trick-or-treating. We're all looking forward to that.



Happy Halloween! Don't forget to have Mom check your candy for razor blades.